MINUTES

OF AN

ASSOCIATION

OF

General Baptiſt MINISTERS,

AND

REPRESENTATIVES OF CHURCHES,

HOLDEN AT

HALIFAX,

June 26th, 27th, 28th, 1798.

LONDON:

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1798.

MINUTES, &c.

The Association met on *Tuesday* Evening, Brother John Taylor prayed.—Appointed

DAN TAYLOR, Chairman.

JOHN TAYLOR, ROBERT SMITH, } Moderators;

EDMUND WHITAKER, JOSEPH ELLIS, } Scribes.

Brother D. TAYLOR concluded the meeting by prayer.

Met again on *Wednesday* Morning, at Seven o'Clock; Brother SMITH prayed.—Read the state of the Churches.

At Half past Ten o'Clock met for public Worship, Brother WHITAKER prayed; Brother D. TAYLOR preached from Phil. ii. 16. At three in the Afternoon, Brother W. TAYLOR prayed. Brother R. SMITH preached, from 2 Tim. iv. 7. Brother SMITH gave out the Hymns in the Morning, and Brother SMEDLEY in the Afternoon. At Six in the Evening met again for business.

Thursday Morning met at Six o'Clock for business. Brother JOHN SPENCER prayed. In the Evening met at Seven o'Clock for public Worship. Brother BINNS prayed; and Brother WHITAKER preached from 2 Cor. ii. 14.

☞ Agreed that the Subject of next Association Letter be the Atonement of Christ. Brother SMITH, of Nottingham, to prepare it.

BRITISH MUSEUM

State of the Churches.

ASHFORD. This has been to us a year of trouble and grief. Several of our members have acted ſo much contrary to Chriſt and the goſpel, as to compel us to ſeparate them from us. In general too lukewarm. Our hearers at Bradwell greatly diminiſhed. Well attended in general at Aſhford. Brethren, pray for us.

BARTON. We have erected a meeting-houſe at Hugglescote, which coſt more than 300l. to pay; towards the raiſing of which we muſt crave the aſſiſtance of our ſiſter churches. Further particulars will be laid before thoſe who encourage us to apply. Two reaſons we juſt mention here, viz. 1ſt. our old houſe was too ſmall; and ſo ill conſtructed that it could not well be enlarged. 2. Our burying-ground was alſo too ſmall: we had not room to bury our dead. To which we may add a third reaſon, the additional was proffered to be given, provided we would erect a new meeting-houſe thereon. State of religion ſadly below the primitive ſtandard, yet we hope we ſtill enjoy the preſence of Chriſt. Oh! for more love to God, and to each other; and zeal for every part of divine truth!

BIRMINGHAM. Meetings as laſt year at Birmingham and Sutton. We are endeavouring to raiſe an intereſt at Neathertown, a place formerly belonging to the old General Baptiſts. Moderately attended with hearers at Birmingham. Some of our friends very negligent in filling up their places; but others, we truſt, are actuated by a better ſpirit. Well attended at Sutton, and hope there is a proſpect of ſome good being done. Brother Yates is removed to Birmingham. We hope it may be for the advance of religion, and his own happineſs.

BIRCHESCLIFFE. Well attended with hearers in general, moderately at peace among ourſelves; but wiſh to experience more of the power of religion.

BOSTON. We have to lament that ſome amongſt us diſcover ſo little zeal for the Redeemer's kingdom; hope it is different with others; and that ſome are truly in earneſt at a throne of grace for the enlargement of Zion; that it may become a praiſe in the earth. Hearers ſtill ſeem on the increaſe.

BURNLEY. We are pretty peaceable among ourſelves; but greatly wanting in zeal for God, and love to the Brethren.

Our hearers are very few, ſeldom more than forty, and ſometimes not twenty in a forenoon. We fear ſeveral of our members are hurtful in this reſpect by their neglect of public meetings.

CAULDWELL. Tolerably harmonious; and, we hope, religion rather on the advance. Have a few candidates for Baptiſm.

CASTLE DONNINGTON. We are ſorry to ſay that religion is much too low amongſt us. Notwithſtanding we have the goſpel preached in purity with energy and affection, very few profeſs converſion; and ſome who profeſs it do not attend to Baptiſm and union with the Church. We think it will be uſeful to enquire annually, or half yearly, into the ſtate of religion amongſt us; to correct our errors and adopt meaſures to revive our cauſe.—We are pretty peaceable, and hope that in ſome, it is not the quietneſs of indifference, but the reſult of a pacific diſpoſition, and a regard for the venerable example of the Prince of peace.

CHURCH-LANE, LONDON. Our church conſiſts of one Paſtor, five, i. e. two elderly, and three young Preachers; two Deacons, and two Deacons elect. Our places and times of meeting are nearly the ſame as laſt year. We are at peace among ourſelves, and truſt the work of God is going forward; ſome amongſt us are ſpiritual and lively; but many we fear are too much otherwiſe.

DERBY. We have great cauſe to lament the low ſtate of religion amongſt us at this time. Hearers but few at preſent, and our difficulties, on many accounts, increaſed, by Brother Dallyſon having withdrawn himſelf from us. We are thankful for the ſupplies our neighbouring churches have from time to time afforded us, and ſhall be glad if a conſtant ſupply can by any means be afforded us in future.

GAMSTON and RETFORD. Religion we hope is on the growing hand, though but ſlowly; ſome having left their firſt love, and others are too much attached to this preſent evil world; while others are active, lively, and loving.

GOSBERTON. Officers and meetings nearly as laſt year; we have preaching at four places; pretty well attended with hearers, particularly in the afternoon on the Lord's-day. Some members lively and active, others not ſo.—Tolerably united and happy, and have called two young men to exerciſe their gifts for the miniſtry.

HALIFAX. Preachings and meetings nearly as laſt year. Hearers much the ſame as in years paſt. Some of our members fill their places well; and are, we hope, alive to God—But too many

many are cold and indifferent about the things of God; which makes the hearts of others ſad.—We have had our trials this year, which have cauſed a rent among us. But hope they are in a great meaſure ſubſided. Could wiſh to ſee more zeal.—Brethren, pray for us.

HINCKLEY. We preach regularly at ſix places. Pretty well attended with hearers at ſome of them; not ſo at others. Carnal mindedneſs in ſome, want of wiſdom and charity in others, and the bad conduct of too many, make us fear there is a great want of real religion among us; though others give proof of their ſincerity and zeal for God. On the whole our proſpect is not very agreeable. Brethren, pray for us.

ST. IVES. Our ſtated meetings for preaching and prayer nearly as in former years; and for ſome months paſt we have been better attended with hearers than formerly. But we are ſorry to ſay that we have had no increaſe of members this laſt year. Some of our members are too indifferent about the things of God, and very negligent in attending prayer meetings. Others, bleſſed be God, are more zealous and active. We ſincerely wiſh for a revival of vital practical religion among us.

ILKISTON. Pretty well attended with hearers; but we fear there are but few who receive with meekneſs the ingrafted word of truth. We are tolerably united among ourſelves; but feel too little of the life and power of vital Godlineſs. We deſire to return our ſincere thanks to our ſiſter churches for that miniſterial aid they have afforded us during the abſence of our Brother Felkin, who has for five months been under the inſtruction of Brother Dan Taylor.

KEGWORTH. One paſtor, two aſſiſtant miniſters, two ruling elders; and four deacons. Preaching at ſix places; well attended with hearers in moſt places; but converſion work is almoſt at a ſtand amongſt us. We have been exerciſed with a matter of great difficulty, which hath cauſed much trouble, by breaking the unity of the ſpirit, which is ſo eſſential to chriſtian fellowſhip; but having very lately attended to the affair, by the aſſiſtance of our Brethren S. Deacon, B. Pollard, and R. Smith, whom we ſincerely thank for helping us, we hope the peace of the church will be preſerved, a diviſion prevented, and Satan diſappointed. Real vital religion is much lower amongſt us than it was in time paſt; and in conſequence, the practical part is not attended to ſo well as it ought to be: great neglect is manifeſted by too many. Brethren, pray for us.

KILLINGHOLM. Preaching at Killingholm, Ulceby, Halton, Habrough, Limber, Keelby, Aſby, Binbrook, Clixby, and at ſome other places occaſionally, in general well attended.

Some

Some of our members appear lively and zealous; some otherwise. We have reaſon to bleſs God for the coming of Brother William Smedley, as we truſt he has been a bleſſing to many. We hope we can ſay the pleaſure of the Lord has proſpered, and does ſtill appear to proſper in our hands; and that it may continue to be ſo, Brethren, we requeſt your prayers.

KIRKBY WOODHOUSE. We bleſs God, his cauſe (we truſt) is in a more proſperous ſtate with us than it hath been in time paſt. Several profeſs converſion, and the church is tolerably happy and united. We have regular preaching at three places, and tolerably attended with hearers.

KIRTON. Our little Church remains pretty much in the ſtate it was laſt year. Meetings on the Lord's day, for the moſt part, well attended. Hope that ſome are in a favourable way, though we have too much reaſon to ſay the cauſe ſeems nearly at a ſtand. We requeſt an intereſt in your prayers.

LEAK. We are pretty well attended with hearers at all the places we preach at; but few are converted, and vital religion too low, but we hope for a revival. We return our ſincere thanks to thoſe Churches who have ſo liberally aſſiſted us in defraying the expence of Broughton Meeting-houſe.

LEICESTER. Public worſhip in general pretty well attended in the afternoon of the Lord's-day; but other opportunities too much neglected. As a Church we are united and peaceable; and truſt ſeveral of our members are living branches in the true vine; while ſome, it is feared, have only a name that they live, and are dead. We pray and hope for more evidence of real piety, and greater increaſe of the kingdom of Chriſt both among ourſelves and in all the Churches.

LOUGHBOROUGH. In the courſe of this year we have been moſt awfully viſited by the chaſtiſing rod of our heavenly Father, in the death of our invaluable miniſter Brother Trueman: and we feel our cauſe ſuſtaining very great loſs indeed, for want of more miniſterial help, having only one miniſter in ſo large a Church.

LONGFORD. Though we have increaſed in numbers this year, yet we fear we have not advanced in brotherly love and unanimity; yet we truſt we have thoſe amongſt us who have the cauſe of God at heart. At the ſame time it is evident others are of a different complexion.

LONGWOOD. The number of our hearers, and the ſtate of religion, is much the ſame as laſt year.

MALTBY. Religion amongſt us for ſome time paſt has been in a declining ſtate. Lukewarmneſs, and a ſpirit of indifference have prevailed and yet do, too much prevail amongſt us.

Since

Since the death of our dear paſtor, our meetings have been nearly as before; our congregations are often ſmall.—We have prayer meetings on the Lord's-day evenings, and find them uſeful.

MELBOURN. We have cauſe for deep humiliation on account of the low ſtate of religion amongſt us. As a Church we are far from being harmonious. We have need to take the apoſtle's advice; to put on bowels of mercies, kindneſs, humbleneſs of mind, meekneſs, long ſuffering, forbearing one another, and forgiving one another. Oh that this diſpoſition was more prevalent amongſt us! With reſpect to our publick preachings they are generally well attended; but there is cauſe to ſay of moſt, as the Lord did to Ezekiel, they hear the words but do them not. Yet we would be thankful we have ſome of whom better things can be ſpoken. A few are now waiting for Baptiſm, and others, we hope, are coming forwards.—Since laſt aſſociation Brother Whitaker has been ordained to the paſtoral office, and Brother Edward Dunnicliff has been encouraged to do ſomething in the capacity of a publick ſpeaker.

NOTTINGHAM. The Church in general peaceful and united. We have a conſiderable number who are lively and zealous in the cauſe of Chriſt; though ſome of our members are very negligent in attending the miniſtry of the word; particularly the evening lectures. We fear other neglects are connected with this, which occaſion theſe ſouls to be very low in ſpiritual enjoyments. We wiſh alſo to ſee more brotherly love and affection abounding amongſt us.

SHORE. Hearers much the ſame as laſt year. Religion, we hope, rather on the advance. Several appear to be under deep concern about their eternal welfare. Well united at preſent among ourſelves.

TIDD ST. GILES. Number of members and ſtate of religion, the ſame as laſt year. Our hearers rather increaſe.

QUEENSHEAD. Preachings, Church meetings, and other meetings, nearly the ſame as in years paſt, except that we have more prayer meetings on the evenings of the Lord's-day. In general we have many hearers; and, we hope, many ſerious ones.—We have a good deal of ſatisfaction from the general unanimity of the Church and from the livelineſs, regularity, and good behaviour of many of the members; but ſome are not ſo lively and regular. On the whole we hope religion is in an encouraging ſtate: but the weak and infirm ſtate of our miniſter affects many of us much. We wiſh for the prayers of the Brethren in connection.

WISBEACH;

WISBEACH. The number of hearers, and ſtate of religion, much the ſame as laſt year.

CASES *from the* CHURCHES.

BARTON CASE. We have erected a meeting-houſe at Huggleſcote, which coſt more than 300l. we have about 100l. to pay, in raiſing which we requeſt the aſſiſtance of our ſiſter Churches.

Anſwer. If our Brethren at Barton, &c. ſend to the Churches a ſtatement of their caſe, we have no doubt of their being liberally encouraged.

CASE II. (From Birchefcliffe). Is it right to uſe inſtrumental muſic in public worſhip? *Anſ.* No, with five neuters.

CASE III. (From Gamſton and Retford.) 1ſt. Does the apoſtle allude, Heb. vi. 1, 2, to the principles of the doctrine of Chriſt taught under the law or under the goſpel? *Anſ.* Under the goſpel 16, under the law two. All the reſt neuters.

2d. If under the goſpel how muſt we reconcile the plural word *Baptiſms*, with Eph. iv. 5. one Baptiſm, &c.

Anſ. The apoſtle is, in Eph. iv. 5, recommending the unity of the ſpirit in the Church; and in order to that unity of the ſpirit he ſpeaks of but one baptiſm. That is not his deſign in Heb. vi. 1, 2, therefore there can be no need of reconciling the two places, as the apoſtle had two different views before him.

3d. If they are our goſpel principles, how muſt we account for the apoſtle's ſilence about faith in Chriſt, and the Lord's Supper?

Anſ. There does not appear any difficulty, we think, in the apoſtle's omiſſion of faith in Chriſt, and the Lord's Supper, becauſe there is no neceſſity to ſuppoſe that the apoſtle mentions all the principles of the doctrines of Chriſt. If therefore faith in Chriſt, and the Lord's Supper be principles, &c. and if they be ſpoken of in other parts of the New Teſtament, this is ſufficient.

4th. Why is the laying on of hands conſidered as a principle of the doctrine of Chriſt, and yet no where commanded in the New Teſtament?

Anſ. If laying on of hands be not enjoined in the New Teſtament, we think that Chriſtians may be eaſy about it, whether it were or were not always in the primitive Church attended to. Every one knows that there were ſome things done by the firſt Chriſtians, which are not enjoined on all Chriſtians; and as they are not enjoined on us, we have no

buſineſs

buſineſs with them. This is moſt probably the caſe with reſpect to laying on of hands.

Case 4th. (From Halifax.) Have parents any authority to command their children after they are married and become heads of families? *Anſ.* Unanimouſly, No.

And if they have none, are children in the above circumſtances, bound in duty to obey them? No. *Nem. Con.*

Case 5th. (From Goſberton.) Requeſting the advice of this Aſſociation reſpecting Brother Bartol engaging to be the ſtated preacher of Spalding Church. When the queſtion was put the anſwer was No 12, the reſt neuters.

Case 6th. (Retford and Kirton) requeſt, the former that the Aſſociation may be held there the next year; the latter to have it in their turn.

Anſ. Since the connection has been divided into diſtricts, in which the Aſſociation is deſigned to be held in rotation, the miniſters and others, meeting in the diſtrict, have always conſidered it their right to determine the place. It is not now therefore a part of the Aſſociation buſineſs.

In anſwer to the requeſts of Spalding, Bourne, and Peterborough to be connected Churches with this Aſſociation, we adviſe them to purſue the uſual method, adopted in all ſuch caſes; previous to our next annual meeting, that a final concluſion may then take place. We further take the liberty to adviſe our friends at Spalding, to exert themſelves in the cauſe of our dear Redeemer; and if they can obtain a lively young miniſter, whoſe labours would be acceptable, both to the public in general and to themſelves, we think this would be the moſt likely means to revive their decayed intereſt; and remove the bad effects of thoſe diſagreeable circumſtances they ſo juſtly lament. In the interim we have no doubt but thoſe Brethren in the miniſtry who have, for ſome time paſt, given them aſſiſtance, will ſtill aſſiſt them in future.

Anſwer to the requeſt of Maltby Church. We are ſeriouſly concerned for the intereſt of our Lord and Saviour at Maltby; and hope our miniſters in the neighbourhood will, as frequently as poſſible, viſit our friends there, and give them all the aſſiſtance in their power.

The Minor Church at Leiceſter wiſhing to enjoy the privileges of this connection, we adviſe them, for the ſake of order, and to prevent any unpleaſant effects in future, to write to the Churches, as is uſual in all caſes, when a Church deſires to join this connection.

Anſwer to a requeſt from Knipton. We don't at preſent know of any perſon ſuitable for them, but will endeavour to bear their caſe in mind, and, in the mean time, would ſtrongly adviſe them to be alſo looking out themſelves for a miniſter.

The Lincolnſhire conference held at Bourne June 12, 1798, requeſt the aſſociated Brethren to deſire Brother D. TAYLOR to print another edition of his Catechiſm for Children, adding a ſection or two on the principles of nonconformity.

Anſ. After conſidering this ſubject for ſome time the Aſſociation unitedly requeſted Brother TAYLOR to publiſh another edition accordingly.

The next Aſſociation to be at Wimeſwould, Leiceſterſhire. To be holden on the laſt Tueſday, Wedneſday, and Thurſday in June, 1799. Buſineſs to begin at Six o'Clock on Tueſday Evening.

Perſons appointed to preach:

JOS. FREESTON,
DAN. TAYLOR,
W. TAYLOR.
} In caſe of failure. {
TH. PICKERING,
SAM. DEACON,
W. PICKERING.

The Inn, Mr. John Fox's, the Three Crowns.

LETTER TO THE CHURCHES.

Dearly beloved Brethren,

OUR years are revolving. Our days are waſting. Our friends and relatives are dying. Since our laſt annual meeting, not a few whom we well knew, and much loved, are gone to ſilence, and you and we are following them. We ſhall ſoon all be ſummoned to an impartial tribunal, at which every one of us muſt give an account of himſelf to God; and the ſentence will be paſſed upon us which can never be reverſed. "Depart ye curſed," or "come ye bleſſed," will determine our condition for ever. How neceſſary is it, then, to be always ready! But you know, Brethren, there is no readineſs for death and judgment, without regeneration. Without the evidence of regeneration, therefore, we can have no evidence of readineſs. Hence it follows that to know, that we are *born again*, is of the

firſt importance to our confidence and comfort in the views of death and eternity.

Under the impreſſion of theſe ſolemn truths, we earneſtly entreat you all, Brethren, to be diligently, ſeriouſly, and frequently employed in the work of ſelf-examination; that ſuch of you as are already "made meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the ſaints in light," * may "rejoice in hope of the glory of God," † and that, if any of you be not in this happy condition, theſe may now be arouſed to "ſeek the Lord, while he may be found," § remembering that now, and only "now, is the accepted time," and that "now is the day of ſalvation." ‖

Our deſign, in this epiſtle, is to aſſiſt you in this momentous enquiry, that you may come to that deciſion concerning your ſpiritual ſtate, without which you cannot have ſolid peace either living or dying.

It is hoped we need not attempt to prove to you, dear Brethren, that this knowledge of your ſpiritual condition is attainable. The exhortation of the Apoſtle demonſtrates it ſufficiently. He ſays, "*prove* your own ſelves." ‡ For you will not ſuppoſe that ſuch an exhortation would have been given to us, had it been impoſſible for us to reduce it to practice. Beſides, it is evident that the primitive Chriſtians did know the ſtate of their own ſouls. This might be evinced from a multitude of paſſages. Amongſt which we earneſtly recommend the following to your attentive peruſal. Rom. v. 1—6. 2 Cor. v. 1—5. Col. i. 12—14. 1 John ii. 3—5. iii. 14. 24. iv. 13, &c. Now if they knew their ſpiritual ſtate, why cannot we know ours? The goſpel is ſtill the ſame. True Chriſtianity is ſtill the ſame. The evidences of true religion in the heart, and the fruits of it in the life, are ſuch in us as they were in them. We therefore, Brethren, as well as the firſt Chriſtians, at leaſt, may "prove our own ſelves."

Nor need we enlarge in proof that ſuch knowledge of the ſafety of our condition, is very deſirable. I know that I am a creature made for an eternal duration. My exiſtence, hereafter, muſt be in "everlaſting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels," or in everlaſting glory, with the bleſſed God, his Son Jeſus, and happy ſpirits in heaven. With theſe views, to be in a ſtate of uncertainty which will be my portion, muſt occaſion anxiety from which every wiſe man would deſire to be delivered. On the other hand, to know that I am an heir of glory, that "the Spirit of God beareth witneſs with our ſpirits

* Col. i. 12. † Rom. v. 2. § Iſai. lv. 6. ‖ 2 Cor. vi. 2.
‡ 2 Cor. xiii. 5.

that we are the children of God,"* muſt produce a conſolation in life, and in death, to which profane ſinners, and merely formal profeſſors are entire ſtrangers; and in compariſon of which the whole world is a trifle.

On this, as on every other ſubject, the ſcriptures are our only teſt and guide. To them we muſt therefore diligently advert. In the few following pages, let us conſider what information they give us on this moſt intereſting ſubject. It may be proper, for the ſake of perſpicuity, I. To obſerve, that ſome things, which have been introduced on this ſubject, prove nothing either for or againſt us. II. To mention ſome certain marks of an unregenerate perſon. III. To lay before you a few evidences of true Chriſtianity, which, if you bear them, will indiſputably prove that your condition is ſafe for eternity; that you are the children of God.

I. "Some things have been introduced on this ſubject which prove nothing, either for or againſt the perſon in whom they are found."

1. It is no proof that any one is or is not truly converted, becauſe he has experienced great alarms and terrours of conſcience. That ſome who are converted, have been exceedingly alarmed with a ſenſe of their ſin and danger, is readily acknowledged. This appears to have been the caſe of the Philippian jailor, † and of many others, both in former and later ages. But ſome are brought to the knowledge of Chriſt more gradually; and their minds have been opened, as that of Lydia ‡ appears to have been, without any particular alarms, or terrours of mind. Many on the contrary have been alarmed and terrified in their conſciences who never appeared to be truly converted. This ſeems to have been the caſe of Cain, of Pharaoh, of Ahab, of Judas, and of many others, in following ages, down to the preſent time. To which we may add that the ſcriptures never mention theſe alarms of conſcience, as affording the leaſt evidence that the perſon who is, or who has been thus alarmed, is a true Chriſtian. We can, therefore, derive no evidence that any one either is, or is not, a true Chriſtian from this conſideration.

2. Nor are particular impulſes of joy, or great elations of mind any proof of the exiſtence, or the want of true Chriſtianity, in the perſon by whom they are experienced. It is certain that real believers have a holy "joy in God, through our Lord Jeſus Chriſt:" and this joy is ſometimes great and uncommon. But there is a joy which may be experienced in the total abſence of real Chriſtianity. The ſtony ground hearers received

* Rom. viii. 16. † Acts xvi. 30.
‡ Acts xvi. 14.

the

the word with joy, and yet had no root in themſelves.* No are we taught, in any part of ſcripture, to conclude that we are, or are not in the favour of God, becauſe we have not experienced theſe peculiar joys and elations of mind.

3. No outward profeſſion of religion, or particular forms of worſhip can be a proof that we are, or are not in a truly converted ſtate. The parable of the ten virgins† is evidently deſigned to repreſent the *fooliſh* virgins as profeſſors of true religion, and profeſſors outwardly of the ſame ſort with the *wiſe* virgins. Ananias and Sapphira ‡ were profeſſors of the ſame religion with the other Chriſtians, in the firſt, and, we may reaſonably ſuppoſe, in the pureſt Chriſtian church. But they were the ſubjects of allowed pride, hypocriſy and deceit. Hypocrites and deceivers have been too common in all churches, and in all ages. Nothing can, therefore be certainly concluded in our favour from our being in the fellowſhip of the pureſt church upon earth.

4. We may have great and ſplendid abilities, and employ theſe abilities in promoting the intereſt of true religion, and yet have no title to eternal felicity. It is true that many real believers have great abilities, both natural and acquired; and employ them to good purpoſe for their Lord and Saviour, in the defence, the ſupport, and the propagation of his truth and intereſt. Such was the apoſtle Paul, and ſuch have thouſands been ſince the primitive ages of Chriſtianity. But our Saviour himſelf aſſures us that there are many ſplendid profeſſors of a very different character. Let us hear his words, and tremble. "Many will ſay to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not propheſied in thy name?" and in thy name caſt out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works? And then will I profeſs unto them, "I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity §."

II. We will mention ſome certain marks of an unregenerate perſon.

1. If we live in the allowed indulgence of known ſin. That a real ſaint may be tempted to ſin, and in ſome unwary moment, may comply with the temptation, is indiſputably evident, from the examples of Noah, of Moſes, of David, of Peter, and of too many others. Yet we are at the ſame time, poſitively aſſured, by an infallible authority, that thoſe who live in ſin cannot enter into the kingdom of God. On this ſubject, to avoid being tedious, we entreat you ſeriouſly to read and to conſider the following paſſages. 1 Cor. vi. 9. 10. Epheſ. v. 3—5. Gal. v. 19—21. Col. iii. 5, 6. Rev. xxi. 8.

Where ſuch ſins are indulged, there is no true repentance;

* Mat. xiii. 20. Mark iv. 16. † Mat. xxv. 1—12.
‡ Acts v. § Matt. vii. 22. 23.

and

and unleſs we repent we muſt all periſh *. There is no faith, which "worketh by love," or which puriſieth the heart †. And he that believeth not ſhall be damned ‡. There is no ſcriptural regeneration; for "whoſoever is born of God doth not commit ſin §," and "except a man be born again, he ſhall not ſee the kingdom of God ¶." This may be ſaid reſpecting ſins of allowed omiſſion, as well as thoſe of commiſſion. Hear one paſſage of ſcripture, inſtead of many. "He that ſaith, I know him, and keepeth not his commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him ‖"

2. Thoſe who have not a ſincere love to all mankind, and a peculiar love to all true believers in Jeſus Chriſt, muſt be excluded from the number of real Chriſtians. The great God, our heavenly Father is "good to all, and his tender mercies are over all his works" ** A real Chriſtian, has the ſpirit of God dwelling in him ††. He who has the ſpirit of God, will, in his meaſure, imitate his Father in heaven. Saints are "created after God, in righteouſneſs and true holineſs." In this view, our bleſſed Saviour requires that his diſciples love their very enemies. Conſider his expreſſive and ſtriking language. "I ſay unto you, love your enemies, bleſs them that curſe you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which deſpitefully uſe you, and perſecute you; that ye may be the children of your Father which is in heaven, for he maketh his ſun to ariſe on the evil, and on the good, and ſendeth rain on the juſt, and on the unjuſt." ‡‡

But how much ſoever we love and pity all mankind, we ſhall, if real Chriſtians, have a peculiar affection for true believers. "Every one that loveth him that begat, loveth him alſo that is begotten of him. Whoſoever doth not righteouſneſs is not of God, neither he that loveth not his brother. He that loveth not, knoweth not God; for God is love" §§

It may be proper to obſerve here, that we cannot rationally love all men, nor even all profeſſors, as true Chriſtians; becauſe they evidently are not ſuch. Too many who make a profeſſion of chriſtianity make it awfully manifeſt, that they are deſtitute of the nature and ſpirit of it. But where the love and image of Chriſt appear, there is chriſtianity; and ſuch as give this proof of their being the diſciples of Chriſt, are to be loved and reſpected as ſuch, by all who are born again. Thus we ſhall exemplify the apoſtolic exhortation. "As we have opportunity, let us do good unto all men, eſpecially unto them who are of the houſhold of faith." ‖‖

* Luke xiii. 3, 5. † Acts xv. 9. Gal. v. 6. ‡ Mark xvi. 16. § 1 John iii. 9. ¶ John iii. 3. ‖ 1 John ii. 4. ** Pſal. cxlv. 9. †† Rom. viii. 9. ‡‡ Mat. v. 44, 45. §§ 1 John iii. 10. iv. 8. v. 1. ‖‖ Gal. vi. 10.

3. Thoſe who are not concerned to maintain an oppoſition to their natural inbred corruptions, and who do not, by grace, obtain a conqueſt over them, are not in a ſtate of ſalvation. It has been confirmed by the experience of the ſaints in all ages, that "the fleſh luſteth againſt the ſpirit, and the ſpirit againſt the fleſh; and theſe are contrary the one to the other."* But it has always been their happineſs, that they have "walked not after the fleſh but after the ſpirit; and that the law of the ſpirit of life in Chriſt Jeſus has made them free from the law of ſin and death†." The ſtanding and irrevocable decree of God has therefore, ever been, "If ye live after the fleſh ye ſhall die; but if ye, through the ſpirit, do mortify the deeds of the body, ye ſhall live." ‡

4. Thoſe who ſet their hearts on the preſent world, and are carried away in purſuit of the riches, honours, pleaſures, or friendſhip of it, cannot, dying in this ſtate, be happy hereafter. The grace of God, when it reigns in the heart, not only gives a reliſh and bias for ſpiritual objects; but it alſo gives power and dominion over the allurements of this preſent world. To deliver us from this preſent evil world is one part of the ſalvation of Jeſus Chriſt, which his people enjoy in him. § If we "mind earthly things," as the principal objects of our attention, our "end will be deſtruction." ‖ "If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him." ¶ We are poſitively aſſured that, "whatſoever is born of God *overcometh* the world, and that this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith." ** Thoſe who are ſeeking the "friendſhip "of the world" at the expence of a good conſcience, are not only addreſſed as ſpiritual "adulterers and adultereſſes;" but are expreſsly declared to be "the enemies of God††;" and will be treated as ſuch at the great day of retribution.

5. Thoſe who are not labouring after growth in grace, and greater degrees of holineſs, have reaſon to fear that at the laſt day they will be found to have their portion aſſigned them among hypocrites and unbelievers. It is our duty and our intereſt to "grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord Jeſus "Chriſt." ‡‡ The path of the juſt both in light, comfort, and purity, "is as the ſhining light, that ſhineth more and more unto the perfect day." §§ And when the Chriſtian's hope is mentioned, we are expreſsly informed, that "every one who hath this hope in him, purifieth himſelf, even as Chriſt is pure ‖‖."

* Gal. v. 17.
† Rom. viii. 1, 2.
‡ Rom. viii. 13.
§ Gal. i. 4.
‖ Phil. iii. 19.
¶ 1 John ii. 15.
** 1 John v. 4.
†† James iv. 4.
‡‡ 2 Pet. iii. 18.
§§ Prov. iv. 18.
‖‖ 1 John iii. 3.

III. It

III. It remains that we briefly mention ſome certain evidences of genuine chriſtianity. Theſe may encourage any of you who are poſſeſſed of them, with pleaſure to look forward "to a bliſsful immortality; to an inheritance incorruptible, un-"defiled, and that fadeth not away; reſerved in heaven for you."

1. Every real Chriſtian places his truſt or confidence in the Lord Jeſus Chriſt as his Saviour. This is the frequent doctrine of the New Teſtament. Believing in Chriſt is not merely an aſſent to the divinity of his miſſion, the certainty of his incarnation, and the truth of his doctrine. It is an humble confidence in him, and a cordial acceptance of him as a Saviour of periſhing ſinners. Man has ruined himſelf by ſin. Salvation is "not of works, leſt any man ſhould boaſt *." On Jeſus was "laid the iniquity of us all. †" He died for our tranſgreſſions. By this means, "he made reconciliation for iniquity, and "brought in everlaſting righteouſneſs" for our juſtification; and ever lives to make interceſſion for all "who come to God by "him ‡." All theſe "he is able to ſave to the uttermoſt;" how numerous and how aggravated ſoever their tranſgreſſions are. Nor will he reject one ſinner that believes in him.

It has often been proved that the word which we render *believing* in Chriſt includes the idea of truſt or confidence in it's ſignification. Believing in Chriſt is, in other places, expreſſed by coming to him, looking to him, receiving him, and flying for refuge to lay hold on the hope ſet before us. Theſe expreſſions indicate more than a mere acknowledgment of the perſon and character of the Lord Jeſus. They expreſs a cordial approbation, a grateful acceptance, and a betaking ourſelves to him for the pardon and ſafety of our own ſouls. In a word, they prove that "with the *heart*, man believeth unto righteouſneſs" ‖ If you, Brethren, have thus fled to the bleſſed Redeemer for pardon and life, you are "juſtified through faith in his blood." You are juſtified by faith, and have peace with God, through Jeſus Chriſt our Lord §."

2. "If any man be in Chriſt, he is a new creature **." A change has taken place in the heart. He is "renewed in the ſpirit of his mind ††." His affections are now ſet upon ſpiritual objects. He who before this change, loved ſin, and lived like the world, now loves God and holineſs; for "the love of God is ſhed abroad in his heart, by the Holy Ghoſt which is given unto him." ‡‡ Having ſincerely repented of all his former iniquities, he "has ſo learned Chriſt, that he is created after God in righteouſneſs, and true holineſs." §§ If this

* Epheſ. ii. 9. † Iſai. liii. 6. ‡ Heb. vii. 25.
‖ Rom. x. 10. § Rom. iii. 25. v. 1. ** 2 Cor. v. 17.
†† Epheſ. iv. 23. ‡‡ Rom. v. 5. §§ Epheſ. iv. 20—24.

change

change be experienced by you, beloved brethren, you may rejoice. "Bleſſed are the pure in heart, for they ſhall ſee "God." Only you will pleaſe to remember, that

3. "A tree is known by it's fruits." When the tree is good, the fruit will be good. "Being made free from ſin, we ſhall become the ſervants of God. We ſhall have our fruit unto holineſs, and the end will be everlaſting life*". He that is born of God, therefore, as we have already obſerved, doth not practiſe ſin. He does not live in the allowed indulgence of any known evil. But "he that doth righteouſneſs, is righteous, even as he is righteous.—In this the children of God are manifeſt, and the children of the devil †." When our Lord was on earth, he ſaid "ye are my friends, if ye do whatſoever I command you ‡;" and his beloved diſciple John ſays "Whoſo keepeth his word, in him verily is the love of God perfected. Hereby know we that we are in him§." From theſe paſſages it appears, that thoſe who are ſo renewed in their hearts, that they practiſe uniform obedience to Chriſt in their lives, have a ſubſtantial and indubitable evidence of their intereſt in Chriſt, and their title to eternal glory.

It is, however, neceſſary to be remarked, that though every one who is born again, is brought to delight in habitual univerſal obedience, yet he is not beyond the reach of temptation. He may, if not watchful, be overcome and drawn into ſin, as ſome, even eminent ſaints have been; ſuch as Noah, Moſes, David, and Peter.

It muſt be further acknowledged, that no ſaint, even in his beſt ſtate, is free from the corruptions of the fleſh, nor ſo ſpiritual in his affections as he deſires to be. Hence it will always be a truth, that when we are compared with the righteous and perfect law of God, "there is not a juſt man upon "earth, who doeth good, and ſinneth not,‖" and that "if "we ſay we have no ſin, we deceive ourſelves, and the truth "is not in us¶."

4. We ſhall only add, that a ſincere, active, operative affection for all the children of God, is a ſubſtantial proof of genuine chriſtianity. "He that loveth his brother abideth "in the light, and there is none occaſion of ſtumbling in "him." Where this love is cordial and practical, not in word, and in tongue only; but in deed and in truth, we may ſay with confidence, "We know that we have paſſed from death unto life, becauſe we love the brethren**.

It is hoped, that by a ſerious attention to theſe obſerva-

* Rom. vi. 22. † 1 John iii. 7—10. ‡ John xv. 14. § 1 John ii. 5. ‖ Eccleſ. vii. 20. ¶ 1 John i. 8. ** 1 John ii. 10. iii. 14, 18, 19.

tions;

tions, and to your own hearts, accompanied with frequent and impartial self-examination, and earnest prayer, your hearts will be established, you will "know that you are of "the truth, and be able to assure your hearts before God." That you all may be thus happy in life and death, is the prayer of your affectionate and faithful servants in the gospel of Jesus Christ.

In behalf of the associated Ministers, } D. TAYLOR.

THE END.

BRITISH MUSEUM 23 SE 70

LIST OF THE CHURCHES.	Members	Baptized	Removed to	Reſtored	Diſmiſſed from	Excluded	Withdrawn	Dead	REPRESENTATIVES OF THE CHURCHES.	Paſtors	Unordained Pre.
Aſhford, Derbyſhire —	26	—	—	—	—	6	2	—		1	1
Barton, Leiceſterſhire	250	15	1	—	—	3	1	3		2	3
Birmingham —	74	3	2	—	—	1	2	2		—	2
Boſton, Lincolnſhire	97	10	3	—	—	—	1	4	Wm. Taylor	1	
Burnley, Lancaſhire —	19	—	—	2	—	1	—	1	Richard Folds	1	1
Bircheſcliffe, Yorkſhire	67	3	—	—	—	—	1	1	John Sutcliffe	1	
Caldwell, Derbyſhire	46	3	—	—	2	—	—	1		1	
Caſtle-Donnington, Leiceſterſhire	137	2	—	5	3	6	—	5	John Bakewell	1	
Church-lane, Whitechapel, London	221	13	3	1	1	2	2	8	Dan Taylor	1	5
Derby	38	7	—	—	—	5	3	—		—	
Gamſton & Retford, Nottinghamſhire	88	6	—	2	1	1	—	—	Wm. Shipſton	—	2
Goſberton, Lincolnſhire	36	7	—	—	—	—	—	1	John Bartoll	1	1
Halifax, Yorkſhire —	39	1	—	1	—	—	4	1	J. Ellis, G. Dean, B. Butterworth, J. Wilſon, J. Hutchinſon	1	1
Hinkley, Leiceſterſhire	158	—	—	—	—	—	—	—		1	2
St. Ives, Huntingdonſhire	36	—	—	—	1	—	—	—		1	—
Ilkiſton, Derbyſhire —	144	8	—	1	2	—	—	2		—	1
Kegworth, Leiceſterſhire	182	5	2	—	—	1	2	3	John Tarratt	1	2
Killingholm, Lincolnſhire	55	18	5	1	—	—	—	1	Wm. Smedley	—	2
Kirkby-wood-houſe, Nottinghamſhire	54	4	2	—	—	4	—	2		—	1
Kirton, Lincolnſhire —	44	2	—	—	—	—	—	2		1	1
Leak, Nottinghamſhire	232	5	3	—	2	4	—	5	Richard Thorman	1	
Leiceſter	81	7	2	—	1	4	—	3		1	
Loughborough, Leiceſterſhire	427	13	3	—	4	5	1	12	Joſeph Johnſon, Jarvis Miller	1	
Longford, Warwickſhire	138	26	—	1	—	—	1	—		1	
Longwood, Yorkſhire	8	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	John Booth	—	1
Maltby, Lincolnſhire	40	—	—	—	—	—	—	—		—	
Melbourne, Derbyſhire	294	3	1	1	—	2	—	8	Edmund Whitaker	1	2
Nottingham	273	28	2	1	4	2	—	5	Robert Smith	1	1
Queenſhead, Yorkſhire	62	9	—	1	—	—	—	1	John Taylor, J. Stocks, R. Bariſtow	1	1
Shore, ditto	8	1	—	—	—	1	2	—	John Spencer, Edmund Holt	—	1
Tid St. Giles, Lincolnſhire	15	—	—	—	—	—	—	—		1	
Wiſbeach, Cambridgeſhire	53	—	1	—	—	—	—	1		1	
Preſent members —	3438	199	30	17	21	47	20	72		24	31

Clear increaſe 80.